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| Notice of Allowability | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 09/777,120 | KAUFMAN ET AL. |
| | Examiner | Art Unit |
| | Seyed Azarian | 2624 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 7/24/2006.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 51-59 and 62-72 now renumbered as 1-20.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

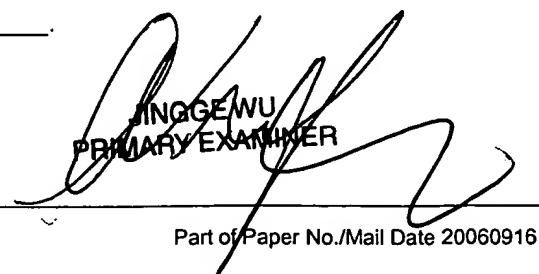
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 1/30/2006
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.



JINGGE WU
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
2. The application has amended as follows:

In the claims

Claim 65, line 1, delete -- 61 -- after phrase "according to claim" and insert -- 64 -- after phrase "according to claim".

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

3. Based on applicant's amendment, filed 7/24/2006, see page 7 through page 11, of the remarks, with respect to cancellation of claims 1-50 and 60-61 and applicant's amendment of claims 51, 52, 54, 55, 62 and 65, have been fully considered and are persuasive and upon further consideration the art rejection of 102(b) and 103(a) for claims 51-59 and 62-72, are hereby withdrawn.

4. Claims 51-59 and 62-72 now renumbered as 1-20 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

The present invention relates to a system and method for performing a volume based three-dimensional virtual examination, and more particularly relates to a system, which offers enhanced visualization and navigation properties.

5. With respect to claim 51 representing claim 62, the closest prior art of record (Vining and Greensite) references do not disclose or suggest, among other things, "converting the imaging scan data to a volume representation including a plurality of voxels, at least a portion of the voxels representing a surface of the region of interest, analyzing a first portion of voxels representing a the surface to determine a context surface texture feature of the region of interest, and analyzing a second portion of voxels representing a the surface to identify a local surface texture feature, and comparing the local surface texture feature to the context surface texture feature and identifying the local surface texture as indicative of an abnormality if the local surface texture is at least sufficiently, different from the context texture feature.

These key features in combination with the other features of the claimed invention are neither taught nor suggested by (Vining and Greensite) prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Seyed Azarian whose telephone number is (571) 272-7443. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jingge Wu, can be reached at (571) 272-7429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published application may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

*Seyed Azarian
Patent Examiner
Group Art Unit 2624
September 17,2006*